REMARKS

An Office Communication was mailed January 18, 2006, indicating that claims 4 and 16 are objected to as being in improper dependent form and to either cancel the claims or correct their dependency. Accordingly, Applicants are herewith submitting a corrected claim listing wherein the dependency has been corrected. Claims 4 and 16 have been amended to depend upon claim 1 in view of the cancellation of claims 3 and 15. This amendment is clear from the context. These amendments do not introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendment it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

If any additional fee is required, charge Deposit Account No. 50-0850.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated:

Ronald I. Eisenstein (Reg. No. 30,628)
J. Amelia Feulner (Reg. No. 58,039)
NIXON PEABODY LLP
100 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02110
617-345-6054

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A modified gp120 polypeptide comprising portions of at least two conserved regions of an envelope protein selected from a ~~primate lentivirus~~ the group of lentiviruses consisting of HIV-1, HIV-2 and SIV, wherein at least one of the following changes relative to the wild-type ~~to~~ gp120 protein is made:

(a) introduction of disulfide bonds to decrease the free energy of folding relative to the wild type gp120 protein ;

(b) filling a cavity of the gp120 protein with hydrophobic amino acid residues; or

(c) introducing a Pro residue at a defined turn structure; ~~or~~

~~(d) increasing the hydrophobicity across the interface between the gp120 domains;~~

wherein the modified polypeptide maintains the overall 3-dimensional structure of a discontinuous conserved epitope of the wild-type gp120, wherein the discontinuous conserved epitope is a CD4BS epitope, CD4i epitope or 2G12 epitope.

2. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the discontinuous conserved epitope is a CD4BS epitope or CD4i epitope.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 3, wherein the gp120 protein is HIV-1.

5. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 4, wherein disulfide bonds are introduced between at least one of the groups of amino acids that correspond to Pro118-Ala443, Leu122-Gly431, Phe210-Gly30, or Ser256-Phe376 of the HIV-1 HXBc2 strain.

6. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claims 4 or 5, wherein at least one amino acid residue corresponding to wild-type gp120 Ser375, Val255, Arg273, Ser481,

Ser447, Asn377 of the HIV-1 HXBc2 strain, Thr283, or Asp477 of the HIV-1 HXBc2 strain, has been substituted with a hydrophobic amino acid residue.

7. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 6, wherein at least one of the following amino acid substitutions is present:

Trp for Ser375, Val255 or Arg 273;

Phe for Ser481;

Ile for Ser447 or Thr283;

Or Leu for Asn377 or Thr283.

8. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 6, wherein a Pro residue has been introduced at a defined turn structure.

9. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 5, wherein a Pro residue has been introduced at a defined turn structure.

10. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 4, wherein a Pro residue has been introduced at a defined turn structure.

11. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 8, wherein a Pro residue has been substituted for Ile423.

12. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 9, wherein a Pro residue has been substituted for Ile423.

13. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 10, wherein Pro has been substituted for Ile423.

14. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 1, wherein at least two of the changes have been made.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Original) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 15 wherein at least three of the changes have been made.

17. (New) The modified gp120 polypeptide of claim 1 wherein the cavity of the gp120 protein corresponds to Phe43 of the wild type HIV-1, HXBc2 strain.